

**EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICAN  
COLLEGE OF NURSING  
(ECSACON)**



**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2021-2025**

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## Message from the President



As a President of ECSACON, it is my pleasure to present the Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2025. This plan creates a road map to achieving goals and objectives of the college in the period of five years. The plan focuses on collage contribution towards “Improving the health status of people in east, central and southern African by promoting professional excellence in the delivery of nursing and midwifery services.

ECSACON will continue to focus towards achieving its goal in capacity building, networking, communication and collaboration, knowledge and information, documentation and dissemination, professionalism and (safety) positive practice environments.

The ECSACON will continue fostering principles that led to the formation, “**a College Without Walls,**” include the harmonization of nursing and midwifery standards, improvement of the nursing and midwifery professions, creation of regional uniformity in the Nurses Acts, clear definition of the roles of nurses and midwives and strengthening of nursing and midwifery research activities.

Since its establishment, ECSACON has made significant strides in fulfilling its overall objective of improving the standards of nursing and midwifery in the region and has risen to become a coordinating forum that speaks authoritatively for the nursing and midwifery professions and an advisor to the ECSA Conference of Health Ministers (CHM) on issues relating to these professions and other related professions.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Keoagetse Kgwabi". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

Keoagetse Kgwabi – ECSACON President

## Foreword from Executive Committee

The ECSACON Strategic Plan presents the organization's strategic priorities for the period starting January 2021 to December 2025. The strategic objectives and means to achieve them in form of activities are elaborated in this plan. The performance indicators are stipulated and it provides an important framework for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the strategic plan.

ECSACON operationalizes its mandate through a variety of ways, including training courses to building capacity for services delivery, workshops, research studies, needs assessments, strategic partnerships, building alliances, communication and information exchange, networking and collaboration, technical assistance on advocacy and development of quality improvement and quality assurance systems among others.

One for key strategic priority for ECSACON is the development and implementation of formal training programmes in response to regional needs and the desire by nurses and midwives. The formal training will provide academic qualifications in areas that are complementary to countries efforts. The formal trainings shall strengthen the continuing professional education that is credentialed by the College and recognized by the nursing and midwives' professional regulatory authorities in the region.

We appreciate the support we have received from various individuals, organisations and partners in the development of this plan and we hope that this Strategic Plan will provide a clear roadmap for ECSACON at both regional and country levels. Implementation of the aspirations in this document will contribute to the achievement of health for all in the East Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) region.



Executives Committee members

## **Organisational Profile**

ECSACON is a professional body of Nurses and Midwives with membership from fifteen countries in eastern and southern Africa: Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The College operates as a coordinating agency that speaks authoritatively on professional issues that affect nursing, midwifery and health in general in the region.

The college operationalizes its mandate through a variety of ways, including training courses to building capacity for service delivery, workshops, research studies, needs assessments, strategic partnerships, building alliances, communication and information exchange, networking and collaboration, technical assistance on advocacy and development of quality improvement and quality assurance systems.

ECSACON is prioritizing conducting formal training programmes in response to regional needs and the desire by nurses and midwives to strengthen the continuing professional education that is credentialed by the College and recognized in the region.

The College utilizes its constituent faculties and its Council of National Representatives (CNRs) to deliver its programmes; and implements activities through the National ECSACON Chapters which are also made up of the four faculties of (1) Education: (2) Practice (3) Research, and (4) Leadership and Management.

## Organisational Structure

The operational structures of ECSACON includes of General Assembly made up of all members. The Council of National Representatives (CNR) is the policy making body of the College. It consists of the President of the College, the Vice President, one nursing/midwifery representative who is the incumbent national contact person, chairpersons of the constituent faculties at the regional level and ex-officio members who may include the immediate past President of the College, the Director General of East Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) or his/her representative, and the Manager, Human Resource for Health & CB (now Health Systems and Capacity Development). The CNR also serves as an expert committee in ECSA Health Community with an advisory role to the Conference of Health Ministers on nursing and midwifery affairs.

Through the CNR, the College is able to establish policies and priorities to be addressed in the region, plan interventions strategies, review health status and nursing and midwifery needs of the region, facilitate implementation of proposed programmes, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of programmes; and mobilize resources to facilitate implementation.

Elected members of the CNR serve as the country contact persons. Heads of nursing services, registrars and Presidents/Chairpersons of nurses' associations and nursing councils are closely associated with the CNR members at country level. This team of four persons participates in making decisions on ECSACON affairs, as they are members of the ECSACON Chapter Executive Committee with the country representative as Secretary.

### Faculty Functions

The Faculties assess the health and nursing needs in the region, plan interventions and strategies to address the identified needs, facilitate implementation of the planned programmes, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the activities, and assist in mobilization of resources to facilitate implementation of those activities. Specific functions of the constituent faculties are summarised below.

#### Faculty of Education

- Improving quality of education and training.
- Developing and disseminating of relevant Teaching and Learning materials
- Developing of recognised/accredited continuing education and advanced nursing education and programme
- Strengthening and harmonizing of training programmes for teachers
- Regulating and accrediting
  - Regulating: through formalizing a network of regulatory bodies for ECSA, and continuing with the harmonization process
  - Accrediting: through developing of a system for accrediting institutions and certifying individuals based on set standards.

### **Faculty of Clinical Practice**

- Developing of standards for nursing practice
- Advocating and promoting safe practice environments
- Institutionalising Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)
- Strengthening provision of clinical services and designing models of care and strategies for implementing evidence-based practice.

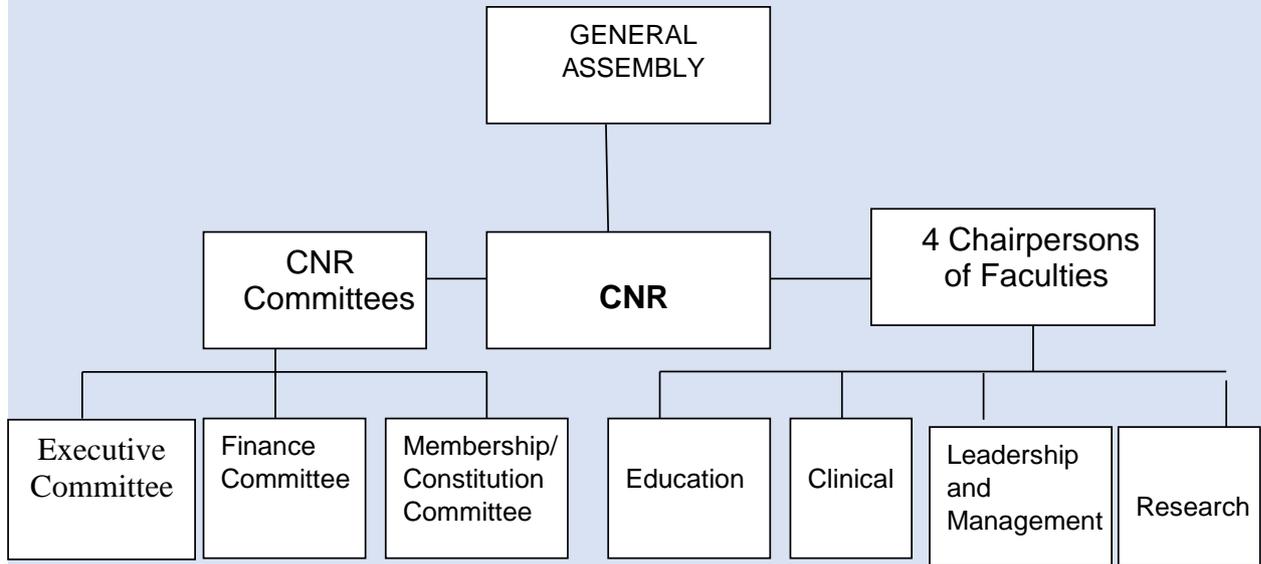
### **Faculty of Research**

- Improving research skills
- Identifying, coordinating, facilitating and conducting research on relevant issues to provide an evidence base for practice.
- Disseminating of research findings and best practices to promote evidence-based practices and policies.
- Developing structured research courses that can support all other education programmes

### **Faculty of Leadership and Management**

- Strengthening and developing structured nursing and midwifery leadership and management programmes in the region
- Conducting monitoring and evaluation of set goals and targets for ECSACON within the realities of member states
- Strengthening systems for resource mobilization and management to support education, research and practice
- Developing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms for all programmes.
- Designing strategies to address emerging models of care.
- Developing resource mobilization strategy for ECSACON by writing funding proposals, and developing a marketing strategy for ECSACON programmes

## ECSACON Organogram



## **Strategic Plan Background**

Development of the ECSACON 2021-2025 Strategic plan would not have been possible without the support of ECSA member states, a number of individuals and organisations. Production of this document is a joint effort involving experts, facilitators and cooperating partners. The document was then approved by the executive committee as the working document to guide the college for the 2021 – 2025 period.

## **Collaboration, Partnership and Funding for the College**

ECSACON is in good stead to work with other organizations dealing with health care issues. Over the years, the College has collaborated with and received support from partners. In this a five-year period, ECSACON seeks to strengthen its strategic linkages with existing partners and forge new ones. to ensure effective implementation of the prioritised strategic activities. Membership fees and contributions will also support ECSACON activities

There have been many changes in the health landscape, including health and economic reforms that have influenced health workforce development in the region. Health worker crisis in the region has been fuelled by among others the brain drains and internal attrition due to poor human resource management practices especially in the public sector of most of the countries in the ECSA region. This strategy has been developed systematically to set the direction for the activities and programmes of the College in order contribute to providing solutions to the current crisis including the impact of COVID 19 pandemic on the frontline workers especially nurses.

## **Organisation Vision, Mission and Core Values**

### **Vision**

To be the centre of excellence for nursing and midwifery in the East Central and Southern Africa region.

### **Mission**

Promote and strengthen professional excellence through capacity building, training, harmonisation, advocacy, facilitation, mentoring, coaching and development of evidence-based policies and programmes. ECSACON is committed to the delivery of quality health care of individuals, families and communities in the ECSA region.

### **ECSACON Core Values**

- Believes in the dignity, equality, individuality and wholeness of men, women, youth children and the elderly. It believes in the welfare of the nurse/midwife, which can be achieved through promotion of nursing and midwifery education, practice, leadership and management and research.
- Right of people to adequate and competent health care, regardless of race, creed, ethnic background socio-economic status, political convictions, gender and colour; and the right of individuals, families and communities to be involved in management of their care.
- Acknowledges the complexity of the health needs of a person - which cannot be met by a single profession. ECSACON therefore values interdependence of various disciplines in tackling health problems.
- Committed to the promotion and broadening of nursing and midwifery education, practice and research, and in the maintenance of high standards of education, practice and management.
- Values the wealth of ideas and experiences within the member states of the region, which can be shared effectively through a unified forum in order to improve delivery of health care services; and
- Recognizes the role of key stakeholders and the value of their inputs into its activities, and accordingly involves them in its activities in order to benefit from their expertise and vast potential in the implementation of its programmes.

## **Strategic Plan Goals, Strategies and Core Activities**

### **Goal 1: Nurses and midwives who are well-prepared and equipped for effective health care delivery**

#### **Strategies**

Strengthen nursing and midwifery education geared to improve quality of students and practitioners' performance

#### **Core activities**

- Orient the regulatory bodies including MOHs, Ministry of Education, Training Institutions, Associations, Nursing and Midwifery Councils, Health commissions /Boards on the operationalisation of Professional Regulatory Framework (PRF)
- Facilitate Nursing and Midwifery education programme evaluations by regulatory authorities using a harmonized evaluation guideline
- Participate in orientation and dissemination of the guidelines to ECSA countries as soon as they are developed for implementation
- Develop and launching of Masters specialty courses
- Organize continuing educational courses in emerging issues including COVID 19, Ebola, HIV/AIDS and emerging non communicable diseases
- Contents on priority emerging/neglected issues integrated in all levels of nursing and midwifery curricula
- Put in place criteria for accrediting institutions for Nursing and Midwifery education
- Assist countries to institutionalise Quality Assurance (QA) and Leadership for Change (LFC) Programs in education and practice

### **Goal 2: Highly ethical nurses and midwives rendering high quality service**

#### **Strategies**

To enhance the development and use of standards of practice and ethical principles for quality service provision in the region.

#### **Core activities**

- Conduct desk review of models of care
- Hold meetings with stakeholders to select and agree on acceptable care model/s
- Develop appropriate model/s of care and standards of care in line with the

#### Nursing and Midwifery Professional Regulatory Framework (PRF)

- Disseminate care model/s
- Identify team to work with the ECSACON Secretariat to spearhead the process of adopting/ adapting the PRF for the specific country
- Review the PRF Document through workshops and review of existing documents from member states and sister organisations.
- Conduct training to strengthen skills of nurses and midwives in order to improve health care delivery
- Implement the nursing and midwifery practice standards
- Conduct an audit on the implementation of the nursing and midwifery practice standards
- Develop criteria for identifying and awarding best practices
- Present best practices at workshops, consultations or conferences.
- Publish and circulate Best Practices' information
- Develop strategies for implementing evidence-based care, and establish monitoring and evaluation

### **Goal 3: Safe and fulfilling workplaces**

#### **Strategies**

To advocate for and promote positive practice environments

#### **Core activities**

- Develop guidelines and recommendation on patient safety, abuse and violence in the workplace, occupational health safety for nurses and midwives
- Facilitate the adoption or adaptation of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) policies and support their implementation
- Facilitate the development and implementation of workplace policies that include prevention of HIV/AIDS, violence, occupational injuries and their management
- Facilitate evidence-based review and implementation of policies on HRH management with specific emphasis on nursing and midwifery retention and migration
- Conduct advocacy and awareness campaigns on positive practice environments to enhance excellence in service delivery
- Conduct surveys among nurses and midwives on job satisfaction and staffing levels

## **Goal 4: Nurses and midwives who are able to conduct research, and use research findings to improve health service delivery**

### **Strategies**

To strengthen nurses and midwives research skills to enable them to undertake research and provide evidence-based care.

### **Core activities**

- Implement structured research courses training for nurses and midwives in phases at country level
- Workshops on writing of scientific papers for publication.
- Country-level consultations on direction for ECSACON research agenda.
- Regional stakeholders' consultation to finalise and adopt ECSACON research agenda and resource mobilisation plan
- Develop an ECSACON Research, Publication and Consultancy Policy
- Publish the African Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health quarterly, with articles from nurses and midwives in the regions.
- Explore options for other journals, especially in nursing (eg. ECSACON Journal of Nursing and Primary Health Care)

## **Goal 5: Nurses and midwives who are better leaders and managers in the health sector**

### **Strategies**

To strengthen nursing/midwifery skills in leadership and management

### **Core Activities**

- Conduct regional leadership and management course for chief nursing officers, chief medical officers and heads of training institutions
- Develop a formal leadership and management short course to be offered by ECSACON Secretariat in collaboration with the country chapters and training institutions
- Develop short term programs in leadership for trainers and practitioners
- Facilitate the documentation of best practices in various areas of nursing and midwifery at country level
- Disseminate compiled best practices to all member countries

## **Goal 6: Effective and efficient ECSACON Secretariat and other governing structures**

### **Strategies**

To strengthen the ECSACON Secretariat and its governing bodies for strategic partnerships, communication and delivery of educational programmes

### **Core Activities**

- Create an ECSACON website at Secretariat with links to relevant international and national organizations websites
- Create ECSACON email list at Secretariat and national chapters
- Create an electronic discussion platform for topical issues and training materials
- Electronic Newsletter regularly posted on website
- Finalize review of constitution
- Development of educational materials and certification criteria
- Develop a business plan for all levels of ECSACON structures covering: institutional development for all operations and educational programmes, capacity building, programmes & projects, and fundraising
- Develop a marketing plan for all levels of ECSACON structures to include: increasing awareness about ECSACON and increased membership recruitment
- Conduct yearly internal evaluation of ECSACON activities
- Conduct external evaluation at the end of 5 years